



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Justice**  
**Corrective Services**

# **Response to the OICS Draft Report:**

**2024 Inspection of Greenough Regional  
Prison**

**March 2025**

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## Response Overview

### Introduction

On 11 March 2024, the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS) announced the 2024 Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison (Greenough), with the onsite inspection taking place from 15 to 18 July 2024.

To assist with the inspection, and to inform the Inspection Report, the Department of Justice, Corrective Services (the Department) provided a range of documentation as well as access to systems, custodial facilities, staff, and prisoners.

On 23 January 2025, the Department received the draft report which noted nine recommendations for review and comment.

### Department Comments

The Department welcomes the findings arising from the Inspection of Greenough and extends its appreciation to the OICS Inspection team for conducting the Inspection.

The Department values the recommendations provided, which are aimed at strengthening and improving services available to prisoners such as health services and recreation opportunities. While some improvements can be achieved without significant cost, others require additional resources. The Department remains committed to progressing the supported recommendations, taking necessary action to ensure the safety and welfare of prisoners within Greenough and working with the relevant agencies to obtain funding where required to implement the recommendations effectively.

As noted by OICS, some of the recommendations made following the 2021 Inspection of Greenough have been raised again following the 2024 Inspection. These include recommendations pertaining to the prisoner telephone system (PTS) and infrastructure upgrades that form part of wider Departmental projects including the Offender Digital Services Platform (ODSP) project and the Long-Term Custodial Infrastructure Plan (LTCIP) 2025 - 2035.

As noted by OICS, a substantial rise in Western Australia's prisoner population has resulted in First Nations prisoners being housed off Country, which has been essential to maintaining the safety of prisoners and staff, security and operation of prisons throughout the State while allowing for necessary infrastructure projects to be undertaken.

To alleviate the impact this has on prisoners residing within Greenough, the Superintendent met with off Country prisoners to ascertain what could be done to assist them in their custodial journey. Initiatives have since been implemented such as barbeques to allow prisoners within Greenough to get together, in addition to the commencement of Team's meetings between the Kimberley and Pilbara regional prisons to provide prisoners time to connect and talk with kinfolk.

Noting the importance of recreation and meaningful activity as a protective factor in prisoner wellbeing, recreation workers have been recruited for each unit within

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Greenough and additional exercise equipment has been purchased to give prisoners constructive outlets for physical activity and well-being.

In addition, community engagement programs such as the fire mitigation program in conjunction with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) saw Section 95 prisoners contribute 600 hours of community work to neighbouring communities such as Northampton, Mullewa and Dongara – in turn providing additional safety resources to communities and skills to prisoners. The Breaking Through program was also undertaken at Greenough and extended to minimum and medium security prisoners, with the program offering opportunities for gainful employment for participants upon return to the community.

Recruitment processes are currently underway for several positions including an Employment Coordinator and Section 95 Vocational Support Officers (VSO) which once recruited will increase Greenough prisoners' engagement in the community through the Prisoner Employment Program (PEP) and Section 95 activities.

To address staffing issues, a staffing review has commenced which will see the development of a new prison operating model that is operationally flexible and capable of meeting current and future demands. The operating model will include custodial operations and support areas including Health Services, Education, Treatment and Rehabilitative Services. Stage one and two of the review - comprising of the development and submission of a Prison Services Evaluation Project Initiation Document and business case is now complete and the focus is now on stage three which comprises of site visits to map out the staffing profiles across the custodial estate. The Greenough site visit is anticipated to commence in October 2025 and the findings will subsequently inform the proposed operational staffing model and forecasted projections to ensure Greenough is suitably staffed to ensure the safe operations of the site and meet the needs of the prisoner cohort.

The Department acknowledges and commends the efforts of staff who have worked hard to improve relations with prisoners and is pleased to hear that satisfaction with head office has improved and staff perceptions of safety has increased since the previous inspection. In addition, the Department continues to work with prisoners, staff and OICS to understand the issues impacting prisons across the estate and implement changes to improve conditions for both prisoners and staff.

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## Response to Recommendations

### 1 Government should support and resource agreed objectives and priorities developed as part of the Department's strategic planning work.

**Level of Acceptance:** Noted  
**Responsible Division:** Corrective Services  
**Responsible Directorate:** Adult Male Prisons

#### Response:

The Corrective Services Strategic Plan is nearing completion which will set the direction and priorities for the agency and identify the role and purpose of each prison across the custodial estate.

Corrective Services will continue to seek Government support to fund the implementation of key priority initiatives outlined in our Strategic Plan and Long-Term Custodial Infrastructure Plan (LTCIP).

### 2 The Department should, as part of its strategic planning framework, audit Greenough's current and future infrastructure and cohort requirements to inform its future plans.

**Level of Acceptance:** Supported in Principle  
**Responsible Division:** Corrective Services  
**Responsible Directorate:** Corporate Services

#### Response:

Corrective Services acknowledges climatic and environmental issues and impacts in the area. Some infrastructure works have been completed (*works to the floor in several units including Unit 4*) with other works to areas such as the kitchen scheduled to commence. There are also a number of other priorities that are dependent on the availability of funding.

Greenough is being reviewed as part of the LTCIP and business cases requesting funding to undertake expansion works will be progressed.

### 3 Improve access to freshly prepared and self-catered meals.

**Level of Acceptance:** Supported - Current Practice/Project  
**Responsible Division:** Corrective Services  
**Responsible Directorate:** Adult Male Prisons

#### Response:

Since the inspection, Greenough has reviewed cereals provided to prisoners, and subsequently ceased using pre-packed products. Female prisoners now package cereal for all prisoners excluding those in units 1, 4 and 6, who package their own. This has enabled Greenough to increase cereal portions as well as generate further opportunities for prisoners to engage in constructive activity.

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With regards to OICS comments pertaining to the 'cook/chill' method, as noted in response to [recommendation 8 arising from the 2021 Inspection of Greenough](#)<sup>1</sup>, whilst this is not the preferred option, this method is an accepted controlled system of food preparation and is necessary to provide flexibility and to ensure the availability of meal quality and variety at all times.

Greenough are also in the process of recruiting a Chef Supervisor who once recruited may implement alternate arrangements.

Noting OICS positive comments regarding food quality at Bunbury Regional Prison, the Superintendent from Greenough is working with BRP to ascertain whether any improvements can be introduced at Greenough. The Superintendent is also arranging for the successful Chef Supervisor to attend other prisons to gain a broader understanding of initiatives implemented to improve food quality and learn how the same initiatives can be delivered at Greenough.

In relation concerns from First Nations prisoners regarding the availability of cultural foods, the Greenough Superintendent met with off Country prisoners from the Pilbara and Kimberley regions in late 2024 to understand their cultural needs. The consensus was that prisoners wanted more barbeques rather than cultural food due to concerns that some foods (such as kangaroo) may not be sourced in the correct manner / not from the appropriate region. Since then, Greenough have made changes to the menu to assist prisoners where possible.

#### **4 Review the functions, practice and operations of Unit 6, comparing what is currently occurring with what should be available in a minimum-security environment.**

<b>Level of Acceptance:</b>	Supported in Principle
<b>Responsible Division:</b>	Corrective Services
<b>Responsible Directorate:</b>	Adult Male Prisons

#### **Response:**

Greenough continues to make a concerted effort to recruit additional Section 95 Vocational Support Officers (VSO's) through ongoing recruitment processes. Prisoners in Unit 6 continue to be employed within the gardens, unit and external stores. It is hoped that once additional Section 95 VSO's have been recruited, this will provide additional employment opportunities for prisoners.

Prisoner Employment Programs (PEP) continue to be offered where possible as far as the availability of employers in the Geraldton area permits. An Employment Coordinator recruitment process is currently underway, and it is anticipated that once recruited, this position will drive the PEP program further.

Programs such as '*Breaking Through*' have also been offered to minimum and medium security prisoners with nine of the ten recent participants achieving employment upon

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation 8 arising from the 2021 Inspection of Greenough Regional Prison called for the implementation of a 'cook fresh' system. This recommendation was not supported by Corrective Services on the basis that the 'cook/chill' method is an accepted controlled system of food preparation and is necessary to provide flexibility and ensure food is available for prisoners in the event of a disruption. This method is a form of contingency planning and will continue to be utilised to ensure there are no disruptions to the provision of food.

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returning to the community. Section 95 prisoners have also joined Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) in bushfire mitigation training and provided 600 voluntary work hours towards keeping communities in the vicinity of the prison safe.

Noting OICS comments pertaining to the use of strip searching, following the inspection, the Greenough Superintendent reviewed the practice of strip-searching of Unit 6 prisoners entering the mainstream prison. Whilst it is acknowledged this is not current practice at other prisons, wand searches do not identify contraband such as illicit substances. Strip-searching has been determined as necessary to reduce the likelihood of contraband being trafficked into the prison due to the proximity of Unit 6 and the visitor carpark.

## **5 Develop and resource a culturally safe and targeted mode of health care for First Nations prisoners.**

<b>Level of Acceptance:</b>	Supported in Principle
<b>Responsible Division:</b>	Corrective Services
<b>Responsible Directorate:</b>	Offender Services

### **Response:**

The provision of health services to Aboriginal prisoners is guided by the WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015 - 2030. In line with the recommendation and noting the importance of providing health care that is culturally safe, Corrective Services sought and received approval for additional Aboriginal Health Worker (AHW) positions. It is important to note that while some AHW positions have been approved and are available, the ability to fill the positions is limited due to the classification level being less than other partner agencies such as the Department of Health (DoH).

To address this issue, the Director of Health Services is liaising with the Clinical Staffing Review Committee about the potential reassessment of the classification level.

Corrective Services is also seeking to create a Director of Aboriginal Health Services position which if approved, will drive the delivery of culturally safe health care within the custodial environment.

Whilst Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Services (GRAMS) provided services at Greenough previously, shortages of health practitioners in the area resulted in GRAMS being unable to continue this service. Corrective Services continues to work closely with DoH on options available in the area.

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**6 Provide adequate mental health clinical resources and support to meet the needs of prisoners at Greenough.**

<b>Level of Acceptance:</b>	Supported in Principle
<b>Responsible Division:</b>	Corrective Services
<b>Responsible Directorate:</b>	Offender Services

**Response:**

Corrective Services is cognisant of the demand for both health and mental health services at Greenough and across the custodial estate. Corrective Services continues to work with State Forensics Mental Health Services to bolster services. Resourcing pressures in this area are further compounded by a national workforce shortage of many specialist medical roles.

Corrective Services has undertaken reviews to analyse and quantify the gap between demand for services and its capacity, with this work informing requests for funding to address the staffing challenges. Corrective Services remains committed to seeking the necessary resources to meet mental health care needs in line with demand.

A further analysis of resourcing and demand will be conducted through Greenough's staffing review which is expected to take place in October 2025.

**7 Create recreation workers positions for each unit to organise and manage unit-based recreation activities.**

<b>Level of Acceptance:</b>	Supported
<b>Responsible Division:</b>	Corrective Services
<b>Responsible Directorate:</b>	Adult Male Prisons

**Response:**

Since the OICS' inspection, the Greenough Senior Management Team have reviewed all recreation positions and created an additional six recreation worker positions. The prison is currently in the process of appointing these roles to prisoners who will drive recreation activities within the units.

Exercise equipment has also been purchased and is awaiting delivery for female prisoners located in unit 5. In addition, a recent business case has also been approved to resurface recreation areas.

**8 Accommodate regional prisoners in on Country prisons, unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.**

<b>Level of Acceptance:</b>	Supported in Principle
<b>Responsible Division:</b>	Corrective Services
<b>Responsible Directorate:</b>	Adult Male Prisons

**Response:**

Corrective Services is committed to keeping First Nations prisoners on Country where possible, however as noted by OICS, the increase in the State's prisoner population has resulted in some prisoners being relocated off Country to enable critical

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infrastructure works to be undertaken. At the completion of these works, those who were from the regions will be returned where this can be accommodated.

Where placement on Country is not possible, Greenough remains committed to supporting impacted prisoners and strives to provide alternative methods of connection for this cohort of prisoners. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Offender Services have initiated Teams meetings between the Kimberley and Pilbara regional prisons to allow prisoners time to connect and talk with kinfolk. In addition, the Superintendent has had off Country meetings with the prisoners, which has resulted in events such as barbecues for these prisoners to engage together.

Greenough recognises the importance of Sorry Time and works with prisoners to facilitate these requests when practicable. The Sorry Time process is well known throughout the prison, with a number taking place across the past 12 months. Funeral applications continue to be lodged and are considered on a case-by-case basis with due regard to risk, safety, and the nature of the relationship between the requesting prisoner and the deceased.

Corrective Services is also exploring other methods of connecting prisoners with culture, including through connection with local Aboriginal radio channels from across the state.

## **9 Explore and identify alternatives to increase phone access while awaiting a whole-of-estate upgrade.**

<b>Level of Acceptance:</b>	Not Supported
<b>Responsible Division:</b>	Corrective Services
<b>Responsible Directorate:</b>	Adult Male Prisons

### **Response:**

Greenough acknowledges the importance of prisoners maintaining contact with family as a protective factor, especially where prisoners are off Country. Corrective Services has multiple programs underway to seek funding to address access to digital services, provide digital platforms, and improve the digital literacy for prisoners.

As part of Corrective Services Long Term Custodial Technology Strategy (LTCTS), funding was approved to implement an Offender Digital Services Platform (ODSP) across the estate to replace end-of-life Prisoner Telephony System (PTS). Implementation of the new system is due to commence from April 2027. Once implemented, the new ODSP will increase capacity to add additional handsets across the facility.

Until the implementation of the above platform, there is no additional phone line capacity available at Greenough. However, to ensure access to phone calls are fair and equitable for all prisoners, local initiatives have been implemented including exclusion times of one hour between calls to provide equity in prisoner phone use.

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